

ZEPHYRHILLS MUNICIPAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY
Regular Meeting

A Regular Airport Authority Meeting was held on **Monday May 21st, at 5:30 p.m.** in the Robert H. Johnson Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

Chair person Dan Evans called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. Roll call was taken. Present were members Dan Evans, Larry Lynch, Ed Knapp, Bill Castle, Juan Vega* and James Spears*. Rachel Nash was absent.

Staff present was Interim Airport Manager Nathan Coleman and Administrative Assistant Lucy Huber.

City Council Member Jodi Wilkeson attended. (Arriving at 5:42p.m.).

AVCON Representative Hilary Maull attended the meeting.

The Pledge of Allegiance followed roll call.

**Airport Authority member James Spears arrived at the meeting at 5:35 p.m. and member Juan Vega arrived at 6:15 p.m.*

APPROVAL/CORRECTION OF MINUTES –

Regular Meeting held April 30th, 2012. Bill Castle moved to accept the minutes as presented. Ed Knapp seconded and all were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

TABLED ITEMS-

1. AVCON. Further discussion of the CIP (Capital Improvement Plan).

Bill Castle made a motion to take the AVCON CIP discussion off the table. Larry Lynch seconded and all were in favor. The motion passed unanimously and the item was brought back for discussion.

AVCON representative Hilary Maull passed out a new copy of the CIP plan. She mentioned that there was an erroneous cost listed for the new terminal building on the previous CIP copy. That amount was corrected on the current copy.

There was discussion involving the shade hangar. Dan Evans mentioned the possibility of, in the future, closing in the shade hangar to make it available for small business. At this time the shade hangar is budgeted on the CIP for a new roof only, but it was decided that the building needs more attention than just a roof. Hilary stated that the dollar amount associated with the shade hangar would be revised to reflect the additional repairs needed.

The CIP costs do not include updating the minimum standards. Nathan Coleman said this cost would come out the regular Airport budget.

Bill Castle motioned to accept the CIP as submitted with the appropriate changes, particularly the first 5 year block. (The “key” projects). Larry Lynch seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS ITEMS –

1. Gary Fitzgerald. Ultralight/Powered Parachute Guidelines for the Zephyrhills Airport.

Gary Fitzgerald presented the board with his proposed Powered Parachute guidelines that have worked for him at other airports for the past several years. He asked to board to express their questions and concerns regarding these guidelines.

Ed Knapp had concerns about the usage of Powered Parachutes at this airport. He said that in his conversations with other airport users they agreed upon consensus was that safety was the primary concern. In terms of the future growth of the airport, how would allowing these type of aircraft affect the desire to bring in more commercial traffic?

Larry Lynch asked what the maximum airspeed in no-wind conditions was. Mr. Fitzgerald informed him it was 30 mph. He checks the weather forecast for good conditions before flying and although runway 04 22 had been previously suggested for his use, he prefers 18 36 because there is less traffic. Also, weather conditions favor that he fly within the first 2 hours of sunrise. (Similar to a hot-air balloon schedule).

James Spears asked about the take-off and landing speed limits. The response was that they are 12 to 15 knots.

Bill Castle said he would like to make sure the guidelines set forth would be all encompassing. Also, that he has concerns about an aircraft that moves so slowly being allowed to fly with aircraft that has higher takeoff and landing speeds.

Larry Lynch asked if Mr. Fitzgerald followed the normal air traffic pattern for takeoff and landing. Mr. Fitzgerald agreed that he does but Mr. Lynch expressed concerns about the amount of time it could take to land if an un-forecasted wind picked up. Mr. Fitzgerald re-emphasized that he carefully watches the weather conditions before flying. Mr. Lynch said it seemed like the primary concern was the compatibility of Powered Parachutes to be able to fly with the normal aircraft that operate out of the airport.

Ed Knapp suggested Mr. Fitzgerald meet a friend of his who has a large piece of property nearby and is willing to allow him to fly from it.

Other questions and concerns:

- Do all Powered Parachutes operate under Part 103 of the FAR/AIM?
Answer: Yes, except for tandem aircraft.
- Do all Powered Parachutes require a registration or N #? Answer: No, except for tandem aircraft. It was noted that the Zephyrhills Airport Minimum Standards do require all aircraft to have a certificate and

registration. The Minimum Standards would require changes if Powered Parachutes were allowed to fly at this airport.

Page 3

Regular Airport Authority Meeting
May 21st, 2012

- The pattern altitude for the Zephyrhills Airport is 1090 feet. The Powered Parachute guidelines indicate 300 ft. This is a concern.
- Although Mr. Fitzgerald said he would only fly his Parachute in the early morning hours, his proposed guidelines say the hours of operation would be from sunrise to sunset. Also, he said there would be only one Parachute operating at a time, but his proposed guidelines say up to 3 operating Parachutes at one time.
- Are Powered Parachutes obligated to maintain certain altitudes when flying above populated and non-populated areas? Answer: Depends on the airspace requirements. This is loosely defined by the FAA.
- There are concerns with liability and safety.

Nathan Coleman believes that at this time the proposed guidelines presented are not stringent enough to allow this type of aircraft at the airport. He does not recommend these guidelines to be approved as submitted. There was comparison made to the Brooksville Airports Powered Parachute guidelines and the proposed guidelines submitted by Mr. Fitzgerald. The Brooksville airport has more stringent guidelines.

Larry Lynch noted that the Zephyrhills Airport differs from Brookville as its operations also include skydiving, gliders as well as other light sport aircraft. Allowing Powered Parachutes here would not mitigate the risk.

Dan Evans said that although Mr. Fitzgerald may be a very cautious operator, others coming in may not be. He was concerned that it would be hard to control the operations once the standard was set to allow Powered Parachutes at this airport. Also it was reiterated that in allowing these types of operations it could negatively affect the future of desired increasing jet traffic.

Mr. Fitzgerald then described the visibility of the Powered Parachute. The size and color is highly visible to other aircraft. Also that the Unicom is probably the most important safety feature as is keeping eyes and ears open.

James Spears said he would like to continue to look at this issue. He does not believe the guidelines are very well defined. The rules are 17 years old and do not apply to all the changes that have been made recently. He wondered if local government rules have the capability to trump FAA rules.

Mr. David Hayes of 3137 Diana Dr. Zephyrhills, FL (Manager of SkyDive City).

Mr. Hayes has arguments for and against this subject. He definitely does not wish to exclude any type of aircraft at the Zephyrhills Airport. Thinking "outside the box" may be helpful, such as the idea of designating the middle of the field for takeoffs and landings and staying out of the pattern, rather than in the pattern. He believes radio communication should be most important.

James Spears wondered if the City would incur any liability if these aircraft were allowed and an accident occurred.

Page 4

Regular Airport Authority Meeting
May 21st, 2012

Juan Vega asked if Mr. Fitzgerald just wanted access to the airport. Mr. Fitzgerald said yes. Juan Vega was concerned that if the Parachute operations were restricted then other light sport may also have to be restricted. As the Airport receives FAA grants he does not like the idea of restricting any type of aircraft.

Mr. Coleman reiterated that there should be more stringent guidelines. A workshop could be held to discuss this. He also does not like the idea of restricting any aircraft but there needs to be more discussion.

Larry Lynch moved that the Zephyrhills Airport deny Powered Parachutes based on safety considerations alone. Bill Castle seconded. Larry Lynch, Bill Castle and Ed Knapp voted for and James Spears and Juan Vega voted against. The motion passed three (3) for and two (2) against.

It was suggested that Mr. Fitzgerald could come back to the board and make another request. It was again suggested that a workshop should be held to discuss these issues. This workshop could help establish an agreeable set of guidelines for the usage of Powered Parachutes at the Zephyrhills Airport in the future.

2. Airport Authorities recommendation on final placement of C-47.

Bill Castle moved that the C-47 stay where it is located at this time. (Behind the Barracks building). Larry Lynch seconded. All were in a favor and the motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS- Fuel Sales

Fuel sales were reviewed and no action was taken.

OTHER QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION-

Bill Castle wondered if the Airport Authority Board was governed under the Sunshine Law or not. Are they only a recommending board? Dan Evans said the City Attorney informed him that because the board makes recommendations to spend public funds they do fall under the Sunshine Law.

MEETING ADJOURNED – Dan Evan adjourned the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

